



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana
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IM Weekly Highlights



- Microwave work from Timberline to High Flat is now complete. A final site walk will be scheduled soon.
- Motorola's work has been completed on the King, Blue, Pinkham and Big Mountain sites, and they are running in wide-area trunking.
- Motorola is completing the work for the last five trunking sites on the east end of the Northern Tier and will be soon in wide-area trunking.
- A Border Interoperability Demonstration Project grant program will be issued soon. The Northern Tier board will be discussing possible projects at its Dec. 3 meeting in Havre. If you cannot make the meeting and have projects to suggest, please e-mail E. Wing Spooner ASAP.

IM Finance Committee Meeting Informative

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana (IM) Finance Committee met in Helena on Mon. Nov. 9. IM Finance Officer Bill Fleiner began the meeting with a review of task items from the Sept. meeting. Members also reviewed several reports, including the Bank Account Register and the July -Nov. expenditure list. Under action items, members reviewed and approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) that will assist the IM Project's cash flow. Members also reviewed the operating budget and discussed the budget shortfall.

In other action, the committee approved a recommendation that the IM file a tax application to be recognized as a 501-C-4 organization that is operated for the promotion of social welfare and to file for a tax extension. Bob Murdo, IM Legal Counsel, gave an update on the status of Jefferson County's acquisition of the XL Heights communications site. A buy-sell agreement has been signed. As soon as the final survey results are turned in, a utility exemption can be issued and the Certificate of Survey and deed for the three-acre parcel can be filed. This process may take another month to a month and a half.

Members also approved a recommendation to file with an extension request for FY06 grant funds with the Dept. of Homeland Security for work that cannot be completed due to weather conditions. A six-month extension will be adequate to complete the work.

The committee discussed the next steps needed for the IM Audit Committee, including a letter outlining the committee's purpose, duties and work needed on the Request for Proposals. Participants also discussed the history of the IM 12-site contract with Motorola for trunking equipment and installations. Funding is available to fund 7 of the 12 sites.

Irene Bushnell, Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ) IM Account Representative, provided the Funding Sources report, and Mark Canton, Motorola, gave an update on the Second Master Controller upgrades.

An announcement was made that Amy Mays is no longer the DES grant manager liaison with the IM Project. Prior to her move to a new position, she prepared an outline of grant issues, which Kevin reviewed with the committee. Other announcements included the news that MACo has appointed a government affairs sub-committee of chief elected officials and that the IM federal appropriations request is listed on Senator Baucus' website.

The next IM Finance Committee meeting will be Mon., Dec. 7, from 9:00 to noon at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd., in Helena.

Educational IM Governance Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana (IM) Governance Committee held an educational session in Helena on Mon. Nov. 9. Bob Murdo, Legal Counsel, updated members on the status of the XL Heights acquisition and provided background information on file an application to be recognized as a 501-C-4 organization:

George Gupton, Staffing Sub-Committee Chair, reported that the group completed its first annual personnel evaluation of the Executive Director, Kevin Bruski, and they met with him earlier in the month to provide feedback. Members also discussed pending IM job descriptions for the compliance monitor and integration planner positions.

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In the Training Sub-Committee report, members discussed the need for technical training and the availability of DHS FY07 grant monies identified for training. An amendment would be needed. The AZ Blueprint for Excellence training also could be funded with those dollars. Funding also could be used to send Roger Hays and Roger Smith to a Motorola 7.6 Master Controller training session.

In discussion of management resolution meetings, members were informed that Anne Kindness, Billings Communication Center Manager, has been invited to present an update to the next meeting of the IM Project Directors. They also learned that the Mobile Data Terminal consortium has appointed a representative to the IM Technical Committee. Members also discussed the possibility of appointing a SCIP plan sub-committee. MACo has named a Government Affairs Sub-Committee to help increase awareness of IM's vision, mission and goals and provide advice best practices for obtaining financial, political and private support.

Sheriff Jardee, Carter County, outlined a sustainability proposal involving a subscriber fee along with a penny per gallon gas tax. Members discussed various options.

Ian Marquand, Public Affairs and Outreach Consultant, provided a handout on build-out progress and a chart expected IM users by the end of 2009 and 2010. The committee reviewed the information and changes were made. Plans are for broad distribution of the report. Ian also gave an update on the results of the outreach meetings.

Dan Sullivan, PSSB, reviewed a draft IM organizational chart and received feedback. It was approved as amended.

The next meeting will be on Mon., Dec. 7 at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd., in Helena.

Instructive IMPD Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) held an instructive meeting in Helena on Tues., Nov. 10. IM Executive Director Kevin Bruski reported that the outreach meetings are completed, work is progressing on NEPA applications and microwave quotations, and phase one of the second master controller is complete. He also indicated that sites in Flathead and Lake Counties have been accepted by the IM project.

Dave Hinds reported on the U.S. Air Force partnership. The central ring is active, and testing is taking place. A mid-December date is anticipated for completion of a 30-day burn-in period. IM

Finance and Governance Committee reports were presented, and the board approved a decision to request an extension on DHS FY06 funds as well as an MOU with the Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) to assist with cash flow issues. In addition, the IMPD approved a motion to file IRS Tax Form 990 to be recognized as a 501-C-4 civic organization and to file for a tax extension.

Scott Bradford, PSSB, explained recent changes and approvals on the COPS grant while Ian Marquand, Public Affairs and Outreach Consultant, provided a final report on the success of the outreach meetings. Ken Mesch, DES Division Administrator, announced that the Governor's 2010 Emergency Preparedness Summit is scheduled for April 6 and 7 in Great Falls at the Holiday Inn. The IM may want to piggyback on the event, depending on funding.

Bob McWilliams, IMTC Chair, gave an update on PSIC-funded construction projects and IM Technical Committee activities. Roger Smith, IM Radio System Administrator, reported on fleet mapping accomplishments along the Northern Tier. He also gave a report on the Network Design Sub-Committee. In addition, the board heard reports from the Frequency and Encryption Sub-Committees. Brian Sewell, IM Project Manager, gave a progress report on the Montana National Guard partnership.

The next IMPD meeting is scheduled for Tues., Dec. 8 in the large conference room on the lower level of the MACo offices, 2715 Skyway Drive, in Helena.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Dec. 3 (Thurs.)**
Mobile Data Terminal Consortium
Helena • 10:00 am - Noon
Helena Regional Airport, 2850 Skyway Drive
- **Dec. 3 (Thurs.)**
Northern Tier Consortium (NTIC)
Havre • 9:00 am
Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St.
- **Dec. 7 (Mon.)**
IM Finance Committee
Helena • 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Dec. 7 (Mon.)**
IM Governance Committee
Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Dec. 8 (Tues.)**
IM Project Directors
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
MACo Large Conference Rm., Lower Level
2715 Skyway Drive